



Howard County

Internal Memorandum

Subject: Testimony on Council Resolution Approving a Variance to the Bulk Zoning Regulations for Maximum Building Height for the Construction of Meadowbrook Park Indoor Sports Center

To: Lonnie Robbins
Chief Administrative Officer

From: James M. Irvin, Director
Department of Public Works

Date: August 19, 2008

The Department of Public Works supports the above-referenced legislation and recommends its approval by the Howard County Council.

This legislation approves a variance to the maximum height limitations for a principal structure in an R-20 zone as shown on Site Development Plan 01-145. By authorizing this legislation, the County will obtain a cost effective solution to the issue of the impacts of R-20 zoning on the design of indoor recreation structures.

Howard County has established Capital Project N-3105, Meadowbrook Park, for creating a 76 acre active recreation park on a parcel at the intersection of US Route 29 North and Maryland Route 100 East. The site is in the R-20 zone which allows for a maximum building height of 34 feet for all uses. However, a minimum building height of 36' 3 1/2" is required to provide for the full range of activities anticipated within the facility. This height is generated by a need for a minimum interior clear height of 20 feet for the ball sports for which the building was programmed. The 4:12 roof pitch is the minimum desirable with respect to visual appearance and water tightness.

Given the broad expanse of land in Meadowbrook Park, this difference in the visual impact of the center is negligible and will not affect any of the adjacent residents. The structure's remoteness (over 1,000 feet) from the nearest adjacent residential property and the relative height of the adjacent Route 100 and associated entrance ramp, which is situated for most of its length above the proposed ridge line of the structure serve to further reduce any adverse impact.

The fiscal impact of this legislation is a savings of \$150,000 to change production of the steel building, already in progress. Approval of the legislation will also avoid a substantial delay in the construction schedule.

I will present this legislation at the public hearing and be available to answer any questions.

cc: Jennifer Sager

Exhibits